

Message Text

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11

ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-03 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 PA-01 PRS-01

USIA-06 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 /051 W

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R 290900Z JUL 75

FM AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6388

SECDEF WASHDC

CINCPAC

INFO COMUSTDC

CINCPACFLT

COMSEVENTHFLT

CHMAAG ROC

327AD TAIPEI

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

C O N F I D E N T I A L TAIPEI 4800

NOFORN

CINCPAC FOR J-47; SECDEF FOR OASD/PA

JOINT EMBASSY/TDC MESSAGE

EO 11652 GDS

TAGS MILI TW US

SUBJECT/ SHARK HUNT EXERCISE NEWS STORIES

REF: ADMIN COMUSTDC 250740Z JUL 75 (PASEP)

1. DURING THE PAST WEEKEND, ROC MEDIA GAVE PROMINENT PLAY TO JULY 10-13 ROC/US COMBINED "SHARK HUNT" EXERCISE. STORY WAS PICKED UP BY ASSOCIATED PRESS AND CARRIED IN AT LEAST ONE HONG KONG PAPER. TEXTS OF AP STORY CARRIED IN JULY 29 STARS AND STRIPES AND LONGER VERSION CARRIED JULY 27 IN LOW CIRCULATION ENGLISH LANGUAGE CHINA NEWS ARE BEING FORWARDED SEPTEL. CHINESE LANGUAGE VERSION WAS CARRIED ON TELEVISION AND IN GHUNG YANK JIH PAO, LIEN HO PAO AND YOUGH WARRIOR DAILY.

2. FOR BACKGROUND, EARLY LAST WEEK, GROC MINISTRY OF CONFIDENTIAL

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NATIONAL DEFENSE (MND) MILITARY SPOKEMAN'S OFFICE

REQUESTED, ON BEHALF OF THE CHINESE NAVY, TDC

CONCURRENCE TO PUBLICIZE THE "SHARK HUNT" EXERCISE.

BASED ON MUTUALLY AGREED STANDING POLICY THAT NEITHER

USG NOR GROC SHOULD GENERATE PUBLICITY CONCERNING THESE EXERCISES, TDC DID NOT CONUR WITH THE REQUEST AND POINTED OUT THAT SUCH PUBLICITY MIGHT JEOPARDIZE FUTURE COMBINED EXERCISES. MND AGREED IT WOULD NOT INITIATE PUBLICITY; HOWEVER, LATER IN THE WEEK MND INDICATED IT HAD RECEIVED SEVERAL NEWS MEDIA QUERIES CONCERNING THE EXERCISE AND REQUESTED CONSULTATION WITH TDC PAO ON HOW TO HANDLE QUERIES.

3. BASED ON MUTAL UNDERSTANDING THAT WE SHOULD RESPOND MINIMALLY TO QUERIES BY MERELY ACKNOWLEDGING THAT A ROUTINE EXERCISE IS BEING/HAS BEEN CONDUCTED, TDC PAO WITH CONVURENCE OF EMBASSY, PASSED REFTEL GUIDANCE TO MND SPOKESMAN, MAJOR GENERAL LI CHANG-HAO, WHO CONCURRED WITH ONLY MINOR CHANGES. AGAIN IT WAS EMPHASIZED THAT MINIMAL PUBLICITY WAS DESIRED. AFTER APPEARANCE OF PRESS STORIES DESCRIBED IN PARA ONE ABOVE,

4. TDC PAO ACCOMPANIED BY EMBOFF MET WITH MGEN LI CHANG-HAO, MND MILITARY SPOKESMAN ON JULY 29. THEY EXPRESSED REGRET ON THE EXTENT OF PUBLICITY ON THIS OCCASION AND, SPEAKING PERSONALLY, SAID THAT SUCH PUBLICITY COULD JEOPARDIZE FUTURE EXERCISES. GENERAL LI REPLIED THAT THE EXTENT OF COVERAGE WAS NOT ANTICIPATED AND DENIED ANY CONTACT WITH ANYONE OTHER THAN DOMESTIC NEWS MEDIA. HE ALSO DENIED MAKING THE STATEMENT THAT THE EXERCISE "PROVED A HIGH DEGREE OF COOPERATION AND OUTSTANDING COMBAT CAPABILITIES OF THE TWO NAVIES", IN THE SECOND PARAGRAPH OF THE CHINA NEWS STORY (SEE SEPTTEL).

5. MGEN LI, WHILE EXPRESSING THE OPINION THAT WE SHOULD NOT DENY THAT EXERCISES HAVE TAKEN PLACE IF QUERIED BY THE PRESS, AGREED TO A MISSION PROPOSAL THAT IN THE FUTURE LOCAL SPOKESMEN WOULD LIMIT THEIR REPLIES TO QUOTE WE DO NOT COMMENT ON MILITARY EXERCISES UNQUOTE.

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6. MISSION RECOMMENDS THT ALL COGNIZANT SPOKESMAN ADHERE TO THIS GUIDANCE IN THE FUTURE.

7. DURING BRIEF LAST MINUTE CALL ON ENERAL LAI MING-TANG, CHIEF OF THE GENERAL STAFF, ON JULY 28, EA/ROC COUNTRY DIRECTOR, BURTON LEVIN, ALSO RAISED MATER AND EMPHASIZED USG CONCERN (SEPTTEL NOTAL).
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